



Advisory Announcement

For Immediate Release: September 1, 2021

CONTACT: Jeremy Botz and Heather Scannell

**Finfish Area Management Biologists
(907) 424-3212**

Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery Announcement #79

COPPER RIVER DISTRICT: The Copper River District will remain closed for the remainder of the week. The Copper River District will open at 7:00 am on Monday, September 6 for a 24-hour commercial drift gillnet fishing period. The standard management strategy for coho salmon is one or two 24-hour periods per week depending on escapement and harvest levels. Current coho salmon escapement is low for the date and current harvest levels only support a single fishing period per week.

During the commercial fishing season, subsistence harvest may occur in the Copper River District concurrent in time and area with commercial fishing periods until the Copper River District is closed at the end of the season. Additionally, waters of the Copper River District will open to subsistence fishing from 6:00 am to 10:00 pm on all Saturdays between August 7 and October 31.

The grass bank marker line is defined in 5AAC 24.350(1)(A) with the exception of this year's extension of the closure line across Little Softuk (**see bold font below**). This closure line is defined with the following points:

<i>Point</i>	<i>Latitude</i>	<i>Longitude</i>
Point Whitshed South	60° 26.49' N.	145° 52.86' W.
Alaganik Slough North	60° 24.65' N.	145° 36.70' W.
Pete Dahl East	60° 20.44' N.	145° 29.14' W.
West Kokenhenik	60° 14.88' N.	145° 10.01' W.
East "East Side"	60° 14.83' N.	145° 03.36' W.
Coffee Creek East	60° 14.19' N.	144° 58.01' W.
Charlie Mohr North	60° 15.15' N.	144° 56.43' W.
Martin River North	60° 15.29' N.	144° 52.52' W.
Strawberry Reef	60° 13.93' N.	144° 50.66' W.
Little Softuk	60° 13.16' N.	144° 41.38' W.

Waters north of this line, within sloughs, and in Boswell Bay within the bay (5 AAC 24.350 (1)(A)) are closed to commercial and subsistence salmon fishing during all periods.

An aerial survey to assess coho salmon escapement was conducted on Monday August 31 with poor observational conditions in some index system reaches due to high water and turbidity. For the week ending September 4, the Copper River Delta survey count was 9,365 coho salmon versus an anticipated range of 21,447 – 44,904. The Copper River District harvest for the 24-hour fishing period that started on Monday, August 30 was 5 Chinook, 165 sockeye, 33,700 coho, and 8 pink salmon with 299 deliveries reported.

BERING RIVER DISTRICT: The Bering River District will remain closed for the remainder of the week. The Bering River District will open at 7:00 am on Monday, September 6 for a 24-hour commercial drift gillnet fishing period. An aerial survey to assess coho salmon escapement will be conducted as soon as weather and water levels permit. The Bering River District harvest for the 24-hour fishing period that started on Monday, August 30 was 9,680 coho with 44 deliveries reported.

ESHAMY DISTRICT: The Eshamy District will remain closed for the remainder of the week. The Eshamy District, excluding the MBH AGZ, will open to commercial **drift gillnet** harvest for a 24-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Monday, September 6. The Eshamy District will open to commercial **set gillnet** harvest for a 24-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Monday, September 6. The MBH AGZ will open to **DRIFT GILLNET** permit holders only during this fishing period. Regulatory closed waters in the MBH AGZ, will not be in effect for this fishing period.

No harvest was reported from the 24-hour period that started on Monday, August 30. As of August 31, 7,001 sockeye salmon have passed the Eshamy River weir. As of August, 31, Eshamy River weir was demobilized.

In response to COVID-19, all PWSAC facilities are closed to the public until further notice.

Copies of the updated regulation booklet, *2019-2021 Commercial Salmon Fishing Regulations for Prince William Sound*, are available in the Cordova ADFG office.

Under Alaska's Health Mandates 10, 11, 12, and 17 commercial fishing is an Essential Business and is part of Alaska's Essential Services and Critical Infrastructure. Commercial fishermen should ensure that all travel and other activities in support of commercial fishing operations follow protocols in Alaska COVID-19 Health Mandates. COVID-19 Health Mandates may be found here: <https://gov.alaska.gov/home/covid19-healthmandates/>.

The next scheduled seine fisheries announcement is anticipated to be at 2:00 p.m. Thursday, August 26. The next scheduled gillnet fisheries announcement is anticipated to be at 2:00 p.m. Wednesday, September 8.

Announcement recordings are available for **gillnet fisheries at 907-424-7535 and seine fisheries at 907-424-7345. In addition, announcement recordings are available in Anchorage at 267-2843.**

Additionally, announcements, inseason harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web address:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.main> (Prince William Sound and Copper River homepage).

Unless otherwise specified, all openings are clock openings based on Alaska Daylight Time, which is based on Coordinated Universal Time and may be obtained by calling 303-499-7111.

The department encourages commercial permit holders to renew their licenses early and to check their CFEC vessel registration stickers to make sure they are current.

The department also encourages permit holders to report observed violations to Wildlife Safeguard at 800-478-3377. Reports are anonymous and cash rewards may be paid for successful prosecution of violations.